



It became obvious that the next right step was to create a working group that could add action to the ongoing discussion over regional operational readiness. In August, 2004, the first meeting of the San Diego Regional Aquatic Lifesaving Emergency Response Taskforce (SDR ALERT) was conducted. Monthly meetings are held. This community of professionals includes

representatives from federal, state and local agencies who have direct responsibility for aquatic rescue in San Diego County. Participating agencies include:

United States Coast Guard  
Imperial Beach Lifeguards  
North Island Lifeguards  
San Diego Lifeguards  
Solana Beach Lifeguards  
Oceanside Lifeguards  
San Diego County Sheriffs

California State Lifeguards  
Coronado Lifeguards  
San Diego Harbor Police  
Del Mar Lifeguards  
Encinitas Lifeguards  
Oceanside Harbor Police

Members of Tijuana Civil Protection and the president of the United States Lifesaving Association also attend regularly.

## DISCUSSION

The mission of SDR ALERT is: “To unify regional emergency services to meet current and future challenges in routine and catastrophic water borne emergencies.” The strategic goals to support the mission include:

1. Promote and provide education and awareness.
2. Identify aquatic first responders.
3. Develop training, operational guidelines and response plans.
4. Develop agency response agreements.
5. Leverage allied agency experience on grant submission.
6. Conduct training, including annual table-top and field exercises.
7. Develop solutions for interoperability communications.

SDR ALERT has been responsible for numerous successes in fostering regional cooperation and readiness. Some examples include regional air/sea disaster planning and exercises; regional swiftwater response planning and guidelines, and regional field training exercise on in-water missing persons.

Each participant attends with the purpose of representing the needs of their own community within the region. The group works together to create solutions using a holistic approach that meets the needs of both individual communities, as well as the region. To use a phrase coined by Ken Blanchard, “None of us are as good as all of us.”

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[Attachment: SDR ALERT Powerpoint Presentation](#)